

## 2. GOLDEN TEMPLES OF NORTHERN INDIA.

SIR,—The question I ventured to put to Orientalists about the Pāṇḍu Temple on the road to Srinagar will, I trust, meet with some response. I would now ask permission to put another question. We hear in the Rāmāyaṇa of Rāvana's golden temple and palace in Lankā. Have architects followed the poet, or had the poet in his mind any temple then existing roofed with gilded tiles?

There are now three 'golden temples' in Northern India. There is the famous old Śiva temple of Viśveśvara in Benares. This is the origin perhaps of the expression, so often heard in the mouths of devotees, of 'golden Benares,' *Suvarṇa-kāśī*. Then there is the great golden temple of the Sikh Granth Sahib at Amritsar, the largest in the world, a dream of gold and marble on the breast of the tank water. The third, and less known one, is at Jammu, begun by the Mahārāja Ranbu Singh of Jammu and Kashmir. It forms the most attractive fixture in the cluster of beautiful temples adjoining the city gate. And one may reckon as a fourth the Golden Mosque at Lahore.

Were there such buildings when the Rāmāyaṇa was written? Which is the oldest such building in India?

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*Fairy Cottage, Patiala, Dec. 4, 1900.*

[The seven-storied Loha-mahā-pāsāda at Anurādhapura, the Great Brazen Palace, so called from its tiles of burnished metal, was built in the second century B.C. In the description of the finest palace imagination could paint at the time, given in the Mahā-sudassana Suttanta, there is no mention of tiles at all.—ED.]